(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken against the guilty officials;

(e) whether the accounts of the NDMC have been audited during the last four years; and

(f) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (f). During the course of investigation so far, it has come to light that NDMC had granted a contract for computerisation of electricity/water bills to M/s. Software Consultants India Pvt. Ltd. in 1985. In 1992, this firm was also awarded the contract for collection of these bills from the consumers.

2. For this purpose 4 counters were opened at Parliament Annexe, Kidwai Nagar, Palika Bhawan and Gole Market in 1992 and later on more centres were opened at Bengali Market, Kaka Nagar, Nirman Bhavan, Palika Kendra.

3. Since the billing and collection of electricity and water bills were assigned to the same agency, it used to collect full amount of the bills from the consumers, issue computerised receipts and simultaneously enter these receipts in the computers. After daily collections, some persons of the agency used to copy the entries of daily collection stored in the computer in a separate computer file and thereafter resort to at random manipulations of the collection entries in this file by reducing the amount actually collected from different consumers. Thus, difference of the actual collection and the amount shown in the manipulated collection statement, that was being submitted to the NDMC alongwith the cash collected on the next day, was being misappropriated.

4. The Computer file containing actual collection was used for the purpose of issuing the next bills to the consumers so that no arrears would get reflected in the bills of the consumers. Only the bills of the private consumer were being manipulated.

5. Although the manipulated statements alongwith reduced cash were deposited with the NDMC cash section on the next day, the statement showing actual collection was used to be deposited at end of the year with the Rent Section of the NDMC, and the two were never tallied by the concerned sections of the NDMC. This encouraged/enabled the agency to perpetuate the fraud over a long period.

6. Investigation has so far revealed that by way of the above mentioned modus operandi the owner of the agency had misappropriated a suo of Rs.6 crores approximately from March 1996 to 27th September, 1996, when the fraud was detected. Starting with lesser amount, the misappropriation in the later stages appears to be to the tune of approximately Rs.30 lakhs per month. Further investigation in this scam is still in progress and NDMC has been requested by the CBI to conduct a special Audit for helping the CBI in ascertaining the full amount misappropriated by way of this fraud

7. The audit of accounts of NDMC was required to be conducted by the Examiner, Local Fund Account, Delhi Administration under Punjab Municipal Act 1911. The Concurrent Audit party of Government of NCT of Delhi have been carrying out audit of various departments/units of NDMC over the years. However, the annual audit report, as required in respect of annual accounts of NDMC have not been issued by them. The last annual audit report was issued in 1989 for the year 1985-86.

8. According to the Examiner, Local Fund the Shortage of staff was one of the major factors which led to delay in finalisation and issue of annual audit reports.

Assistance to Cultivators of Fruits, Vegetable and Flowers

597. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have provided any assistance to the cultivators of fruits, vegetables and flowers;

(b) if not, reasons for not giving proper assistance for the cultivation of these items;

(c) the plans of the Government to provide commercial facilities and assistances for boosting the production of these commodities and to improve the position of India in this field in the World so that the foreign exchange earnings of the country increase;

(d) the action being taken by the Government to popularise these items in the World market; and

(e) the names of countries competing with India in the World on this count?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d). The Government is providing substantial assistance for improving production, productivity and quality of horticulture commodities and for enhansing export. In addition support is also provided for 100 percent export oriented units (EOU) through soft loans and for building infrastructure facilities. Subsidy on air freight, brand promotion, publicity, packaging, etc. is also provided. Improved facilities are being developed for handling of perishable commodities at the Delhi and Mumbai airports.

(e) The main competitors are Chile, Pakistan, Phillipines, Colombia, South Africa, Australia and Israel for fruits; China, Turkey, Thailand, Phillipines, Israel and South Africa for vegetables and Kenya, Israel, South Africa, Zimbabway and Morocco for floriculture respectively.

Coastal Management Plan

598. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the difficulties resulting from the Coastal Management Plan of the Ministry of Environment imposing severe restrictions on construction work in coastal areas;

(b) whether representations have been received from State Governments to remove restrictions; and

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) and (b). Some State Governments/Union Territory Administrations have represented to the Central Government about the difficulties in implementation of Coastal Zone Management Plans, particularly with regard to withdrawal of ground water, mining of sands and No Development Zone for rivers and backwaters.

(c) It has been decided to constitute a committee to look into selected issues raised by the State Governments.

Cleansing of Rivers

599. SHRI E. AHAMED : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken up the rivers for cleansing under the Central Government Scheme and the progress made thereunder;

(b) if so, the details of rivers taken up;

(c) whether representation has been received to include river Chaliyar in Kerala under this scheme, and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) and (b). The Government had approved in July 1995, a National River Conservation Plan to take up pollution abatement schemes in 46 towns locates on the polluted stretches of 18 rivers in 10 States of the country at an estimated cost of about Rs. 772 crore. The details of various components of the National River Conservation Plan, state-wise, town-wise and river-wise are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) and (d). A representation had been received from the Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Shri E. Ahamed for inclusion of river Chaliyar in Kerala under this scheme. The Hon'ble Member of Parliament has been requested to take up the matter with the Government of Kerala. A copy of the letter addressed to the Hon'ble Member of Parliament has been forwarded to the Government of Kerala.

STATEMENT

(Rs. in Lakhs)

S.No.	State/Towns	River	Total cost including cost of land	Contribution of States
1	2	3	4	5
1.	**Andhra Pradesh**		5379.00	2689.500
1.	Mancharial	Godavari		
2.	Bhadrachalam	Godavari		
3.	Rajamundry	Godavari		
4.	Ramagundam	Godavari		
2.	**Bihar**		3222.03	1611.015
5.	Ranchi	Subarnarekha		
6.	Jamshedpur	Subarnarekha		
7.	Ghatshila	Subarnarekha		
3.	**Gujarat**		9869.89	4934.945
8.	Ahmadabad	Sabarmati		